

# THE WATCHMAN

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5.

A. A. GILBERT - EDITOR.

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And, Whereas, the credit of the State has been placed illegally, and it is now proposed to pledge the credit of the State for further loans, by a new issue of bonds, which may be negotiated in the market to persons who may take them, in ignorance of the circumstances under which they are issued. Therefore,

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2. Resolved, That we deem it our duty to warn all persons not to receive, by way of purchase, loan or otherwise, any bond or obligation heretofore issued, purporting to be under, and by virtue of the authority of this State, and that we shall, in every manner, and at all times, resist the payment thereof, and the enforcement of any tax to pay the same, by all legitimate means within our power.

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The remedy of any existing evil must depend upon the exact character of the evil; and the first step to be taken towards a proper application of a remedy is to observe carefully the nature and cause of the evil. The leading fact which has probably induced your action, is the formation of combinations. In many of the upper counties of the State which exhibit themselves in acts of violence upon these whom they deem fit subjects for extraordinary visitation. There can be no difficulty in ascertaining the cause of these combinations. It is undoubtedly the conviction that the existing Government of the State is utterly corrupt; and that it has failed in all the duties which are required at its hands - that there is no adequate security for life or property, and that the taxes laid by the Legislature must eventually in virtual confiscation of the entire income of the citizens.

Is this conviction well founded? 1. The corrupt character of the Legislature of the State has been so distinctly evinced, that it may be set down as an admitted fact. 2. The failure to discharge the duties of government culminated in the action of the Legislature at its last session upon the Charleston election. This action, following upon the previous election laws, which refused any check upon the majority, satisfied the white people of the State that they had no rights, recognized by the Government, and that they must, therefore, protect themselves in the best way they could. The arming of the colored militia, and exclusion of the whites from any participation, placed one class distinctly above the other, and plainly exhibited to the whites that force would take the place of law.

3. The wasteful expenditure of the public money, and the corrupt schemes for increasing the public debt, which have found favor with the Legislature, proclaim in the future an indefinite increase of taxes, while corrupt officers foment these evils, and render hopeless any effort at amendment. 4. The formation of secret societies among the colored people, under the name of Union Leagues, have banded them together in a secret organization, and while these societies render useless any appeal to the better judgment of their members, they naturally suggest a like organization among the whites as their only means of defence.

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do until you change its constitution. There is no possible method of forming an agency, while the principal continues the same - and ignorance and prejudice will never select for its leaders the wise and the good. Only a result from this cause, and from neglect of the great American apathy, that taxation without representation is tyrannical. In our present system of State Government, those who pay the taxes have no voice in the Government. This investigation clearly points to the only possible remedy, to wit: A change in the constitution which elects the Legislature. Let this be improved, and the improvement of the other follows of course. A more intelligent body of voters, and one directly responsible to provide a remedy. Under their auspices, an intelligent and virtuous Legislature would again make its appearance, and the laws of the land and the public officers appointed to administer them, would again command public confidence, and ensure the peace and tranquility of the State.

All this can be obtained by simply following the lead of that State which our present rulers would regard as the fountain of political wisdom, and amending our Constitution so as to conform the qualifications of voters to that required in Massachusetts. Let the voters be only such as can read and have paid some tax for the support of the Government, and the representatives will at once change their character. Such a qualification in the voters would discriminate only against ignorance, and would place it in the power of every man to take part in the Government, whatever may be his race or color.

The difficulty of such an amendment arises from the fact that it must find sufficient favor with the existing authorities to command a two-thirds vote. The difficulty is real; but it is not worth the effort to overcome it? Without some change the State must inevitably drift into anarchy or civil war, and surely we already have had a sufficient experience of the evils of war to induce every one to seek their avoidance. If you, sir, would commence the movement by an earnest appeal to the Legislature, immediately to submit the call of a Convention to the decision of the people, it is not at all improbable that the movement may succeed.

It is true that it will take much time, and that much agitation must ensue. But let every man weigh against these considerations the danger which must attend any other course. Should even the violence which may be apprehended, be suppressed by military force, it is not at all unlikely that as their only remaining resource the entire community will refuse to pay their taxes; and then, where will be the credit and government of the State? Doubtless many bad men will agitate against such a measure, and will endeavor, as heretofore, to persuade the ignorant colored people that the whites will again reduce them to slavery. But your Excellency will be fully able to repel such attempts. You know as well as I do, and can tell them so, that they owe their emancipation neither to your party nor to mine, but alone to God, the Supreme Disposer of events. You can show them President Lincoln's proclamation of September, 1862, in which he undertook to recognize the right of the people of the Southern States to hold their slaves, if they would by down their arms before the ensuing first of January. It was, therefore, from the resolutions of the South, and not from the generosity of the North, that the slaves obtained their freedom. And even now, that freedom is insured only by the amendment of the Constitution of the United States, which was adopted by the white men of South Carolina.

You would, therefore, be able effectually to remove this hindrance to good feeling from the minds of the colored people. Then, again, you would be able to assure them of the kindly feeling with which they have always been regarded by their former masters, before the heartless plunderers, who are now making use of them, had misled and embittered their feelings. These, and other topics which readily occur to you, will no doubt enable you to influence the action of the colored people.

An equal, perhaps a greater difficulty, will be to restrain the impetuosity of the white people. Restless as they naturally must be under the corrupt and heartless despotism which they see disowning over them, it will require the strongest effort of patience to await a remedy which will require so much time. The strongest motive which can be presented to them, for such patience will be the earnest and sincere initiation of the amendment proposed. The first step towards calling a Convention is a vote of the Legislature, and as that body has adjourned, it will be necessary to take some action, before its next meeting, to satisfy the people of the expediency of waiting. If the leading members of the dominant party would come forward and pledge their support to the measure, and urge the adoption of the same, it would furnish such an assurance as would, doubtless, restrain the impetuosity of those who are swarming under their present banner.

On our side, then, we could, with some show of reason, counsel our friends to endurance. We could turn their minds to consider other cases of grievous national wrong, which patience had overcome. We could point them to the example of the noble spirits who, after the endurance for twenty years, of the tyranny of the Stuarts in England, brought about peacefully the great revolution of 1688, and established English freedom upon a basis, from which it has never been removed. We can point them to the American struggle against taxation without representation, which continued for ten years before a resort to arms.

With these examples before them, we would be able to persuade them to await two years for the action of a Convention, if we could assure them that that action would remedy the evils of which they complain.

Persuaded, as I am, that no other possible remedy can be made available, I would most earnestly address these views to the serious consideration of your Excellency, and would urge them upon all those who seek the permanent peace and welfare of the State.

With much respect, your obedient servant,

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DEAR SIR: Not having been present at the conference to which I was recently invited by your Excellency, I have thought it due to you, that I should, as soon as it was in my power, submit to you the counsel, which, in my opinion, the present exigencies of our State call for.

The remedy of any existing evil must depend upon the exact character of the evil; and the first step to be taken towards a proper application of a remedy is to observe carefully the nature and cause of the evil. The leading fact which has probably induced your action, is the formation of combinations. In many of the upper counties of the State which exhibit themselves in acts of violence upon these whom they deem fit subjects for extraordinary visitation. There can be no difficulty in ascertaining the cause of these combinations. It is undoubtedly the conviction that the existing Government of the State is utterly corrupt; and that it has failed in all the duties which are required at its hands - that there is no adequate security for life or property, and that the taxes laid by the Legislature must eventually in virtual confiscation of the entire income of the citizens.

Is this conviction well founded? 1. The corrupt character of the Legislature of the State has been so distinctly evinced, that it may be set down as an admitted fact. 2. The failure to discharge the duties of government culminated in the action of the Legislature at its last session upon the Charleston election. This action, following upon the previous election laws, which refused any check upon the majority, satisfied the white people